

**ABSTRACT**

Antimicrobial compositions having synergistic combinations of octoxyglycerin and at least one other antimicrobial agent in formulations which are more effective than prior art compositions without causing increased irritation to the skin of the average user. In certain embodiments, skin irritation may be minimized by low concentrations of antimicrobials and/or the presence of soothing compounds such as zinc. Preferred embodiments include combinations of octoxyglycerin, a quaternary compound, and at least one other antimicrobial agent. Without being bound to any particular theory, it is hypothesized that the unexpected antimicrobial effectiveness of combinations of octoxyglycerin may result from an enhancement of the permeability of microbes to antimicrobials caused by octoxyglycerin. Hydroalcoholic gel composition containing alcohol, water, hydrogel, and emollient or emulsifier, wherein the composition has a viscosity of below 2000 centipoises at between 20 and 40 °C. This skin-friendly hydroalcoholic gel composition, which can be further combined with silicone polymer, emollient solvent, thickening agent and antimicrobial agent, enhances rapid and long-term antimicrobial efficacy.